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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13
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P 281410Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6933
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, XF, JO, KU
SUBJECT: PLO/FATAH POLITICAL VIEWS: KHALID AL-HASAN AND MAHMUD ABBAS STATEMENTS ON CURRENT PALESTINIAN ISSUES

REF: KUWAIT 5912

1. SUMMARY: IN TWO RECENT INTERVIEWS IN KUWAIT, KHALID AL-HASAN HAS SUPPORTED NOTIONS OF PLO PARTICIPATION WITHIN SINGLE ARAB DELEGATION TO RESUMED GENEVA CONFERENCE. HIS VIEWS MAY OR MAY NOT REFLECT BROADER PLO THINKING, BUT THEY ARE IN LINE WITH SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN POSITIONS AS UNDERSTOOD HERE. PROBABLY COINCIDENTALLY, AN OFFICIAL PLO DELEGATION HEADED BY ABU MAZIN (MAHMUD ABBAS) ARRIVED IN KUWAIT FROM DAMASCUS PRESUMABLY CARRYING TO GOK THE OFFICIAL PLO WORD ON VARIOUS PALESTINIAN MATTERS. ABU MAZIN WAS MORE CAUTIOUS THAN AL-HASAN IN HIS STATEMENTS TO PRESS, DECLINING TO ADDRESS QUESTION OF PLO PARTICIPATION AT
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GENEVA. END SUMMARY

2. FATAH LEADER KHALID AL-HASAN HAS AGAIN SPOKEN OUT IN KUWAIT ON MAJOR PALESTINIAN ISSUES OF THE MOMENT. IN SEPARATE INTERVIEWS WITH THE SYRIAN NEWS AGENCY CORRESPONDENT PUBLISHED IN AL-QABAS AND WITH AL-ANBA' DEC.

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26, AL-HASAN ADDRESSED QUESTIONS OF PALESTINE GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE, AND PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN GENEVA CONFERENCE.

3. AL-QABAS INTERVIEW. AL-HASAN SAID THAT FORMATION OF A PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE IS PREMATURE. FIRST, THE PLO SHOULD BE INVITED TO ATTEND THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON A BASIS CONFORMING TO RESOLUTIONS OF THE PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL. REGARDING WHETHER THE PLO WOULD BE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN A GENEVA CONFERENCE WITHIN A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION RATHER THAN UNDER ITS OWN NAME, AL-HASAN REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE FORMATION OF A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION WOULD "GIVE A GREATER GUARANTEE OF THE ARAB CONCEPT OF THE POLITICAL SOLUTION IN STAGES WITHOUT BREAKING THE RESOLUTIONS OF RABAT". THE PROBLEM OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, HE SAID, IS NOT WHO REPRESENTS WHOM, BUT WHETHER THERE IS A UNIFIED ARAB STAND OR ATTITUDE WHICH GUARANTEES ARAB RIGHTS.

4. AS FOR A PALESTINIAN STATE, AL-HASAN SAID HE BELIEVED IT WOULD NOT BE SET UP AS QUICKLY AS SOME IMAGINED. ASSUMING A DESIRE ON THE PART OF THE US TO PRESSURE ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW FROM ALL TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967, TALKS WOULD NOT END BEFORE THREE YEARS. AL-HASAN REMINDED THAT TALKS ON KOREA AND VIETNAM NEGOTIATIONS HAD BEEN VERY EXTENDED. HE ADDED THAT THE VIEW APPROVED AT RIYADH OF SETTING UP A PALESTINIAN STATE "BY STAGES" WOULD REQUIRE TIME-CONSUMING ARAB AND PALESTINIAN POLITICAL STRUGGLE. THE REALIZATION OF THE SOLUTION BY STAGES IS IN THE HANDS OF THE ARABS AND
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NO ONE ELSE, REGARDLESS OF THE POWER OF OTHERS. THE ARABS MUST USE THE TOOLS THEY OWN TO BRING ABOUT A SOLUTION, ESPECIALLY THE WEAPONS OF ARAB SOLIDARITY, OIL AND MILITARY PREPARATION, TO FACE THE POSSIBILITY OF POLITICAL FAILURE.

5. AL-ANBA' INTERVIEW: IN THIS EXCHANGE, AL-HASAN OFFERS VIEWS WHICH HE INSISTS ARE ONLY "PERSONAL" ON WHETHER SEPARATE PLO PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA IS VITAL, OR WHETHER PARTICIPATION WITHIN ARAB DELEGATION IS ACCEPTABLE. AL-HASAN SAYS THAT HE WOULD NOT CONSIDER THE FORMATION OF A UNITED ARAB DELEGATION AS VIOLATIONS OF ALGIERS AND RABAT SUMMIT DECISIONS. IF THERE WERE A DELEGATION FORMED WHICH EXCLUDED RPT EXCLUDED PALESTINIANS, THIS WOULD BE IN VIOLATION, HE SAYS. IN DIRECT ANSWER TO A QUESTION, AL-HASAN SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY PREFERS A UNITED ARAB DELEGATION. THIS WOULD PRECLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF SEPARATE NATIONAL DELEGATION MEMBERS

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MAKING SECRET BILATERAL DEALS AT GENEVA. AL-HASAN GIVES AS EXAMPLES THE AREA ACTIVITIES OF SECRETARY KISSINGER, WHO ALLEGEDLY SAID ONE THING OR GAVE ONE INTERPRETATION TO SADAT, THEN A DIFFERENT ONE TO ASAD. AL-HASAN SAID THAT A SINGLE DELEGATION MEANS COMPLETE ARAB AGREEMENT IN ADVANCE, WITH THE DELEGATION SPEAKING WITH ONE VOICE FOR ALL ARAB NATIONS.

6. COMMENT: WE RECOGNIZE THAT AL-HASAN'S IS ONLY ONE OF SEVERAL PLO/FATAH VOICES BEING HEARD ON THESE ISSUES CURRENTLY, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT HIS STATEMENTS ARE WORTHY OF CAREFUL ATTENTION AS EXPRESSIONS OF AN INCREASINGLY INFLUENTIAL FIGURE WITHIN FATAH. HIS VIEWS ON A UNIFIED ARAB DELEGATION TO A RESUMED GENEVA CONFERENCE ARE MORE CONSISTENT WITH SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN IDEAS THAN WITH WHAT HAS THUS FAR BEEN SAID OFFICIALLY BY PLO. FOR EXAMPLE, PLO DELEGATION HEADED BY ABU MAZIN (MAHMUD ABBAS) ARRIVED FROM DAMASCUS DEC. 27
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TO BRIEF KEY KUWAITI LEADERS ON PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS, AND IN COMMENTS TO PRESS ON THE GENEVA POSSIBILITIES, HE WOULD GO NO FURTHER THAN TO SAY THAT ANY SPECULATION ON PLO POSITION IS PREMATURE. QUESTIONS OF HOW PLO WOULD BE REPRESENTED WOULD BE ADDRESSED ONLY AFTER INVITATION TO ATTEND HAD BEEN RECEIVED. ABU MAZIN ALSO DEFERRED PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE, SAYING THAT THIS WOULD BE LEFT TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL TO DECIDE. ON QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN STATE, ABU MAZIN CONFIRMED PLO WILLINGNESS TO SET UP A STATE ON ANY INCH OF PALESTINIAN LAND WHICH HAS BEEN LIBERATED (A PHRASE WHICH PLO POLITICAL DEPARTMENT HEAD FARUQ QADDUMI HAS BEEN USING LATELY). ABU MAZIN DELEGATION, WHICH WAS BROADENED AFTER ARRIVAL HERE TO INCLUDE KHALID AL-HASAN, MET FOREIGN MINISTER SHAYKH SABAH AL-AHMAD AND INFORMATION MINISTER SHAYKH JABIR AL-ALI.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, PALESTINIANS, CONCILIATION, POLITICAL SITUATION, PRESS CONFERENCES, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976KUWAIT05978
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D770018-0486, D760473-1251
From: KUWAIT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761210/aaaaaimc.tel
Line Count: 157
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 KUWAIT 5912
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 MAY 2004 by woolflhd>; APPROVED <02 SEP 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

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04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PLO/FATAH POLITICAL VIEWS: KHALID AL-HASAN AND MAHMUD ABBAS STATEMENTS ON CURRENT PALESTINIAN ISSUES
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, XF, JO, KU, PLO, (KHALID AL-HASAN), (MAHMUD ABBAS), (AL-HASAN, KHALID), (ABBAS, MAHMUD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006